



**Town of Wallingford**  
**Economic Development Commission**  
**45 South Main Street, Room 311**  
**Wallingford, CT 06492**

April 4, 2025

TO: Members of the Economic Development Commission  
FROM: Stacie McCarthy, EDC Secretary  
SUBJECT: Regular Meeting Agenda – Monday, April 7, 2025 @ 6:30 p.m.  
LOCATION: Town Hall, Room 315  
45 South Main Street  
Wallingford, CT 06492

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. **Guest Presentation:** David Kooris, Executive Director – Connecticut Municipal Redevelopment Authority (MRDA)
4. **Consent Agenda**
  - Consider and Approve: Meeting Minutes dated March 3, 2025 (*attach.*)
  - Consider and Approve: Monthly Expenditure Reports – February 2025 (*attach.*)
5. **Items removed from Consent**
6. **Discussion: EDC Commission Development**
  - Mission, Goals
  - Strategic Planning
  - Vacancies Update
7. **Activity Update:**
  - Historic RRTrain Station
  - Site Selector
  - Tracy
  - Data Center
8. **Reports of Committees and Staff**
  - Marketing & Retention
    - Wallingford World Wide – May Is World Trade Month
    - Incentive Programs/TIF District
    - Mayor’s Business Visits
    - Broker Breakfast
  - Planning & Zoning Liaison
  - WCI / EDC Strategic Working Group
    - Facade Program 360°
  - Staff Report (*attach.*)
9. **New Business**
10. **Closing Remarks - Chair**

RECEIVED FOR RECORD 4-4-25  
AT 3:36pm AND RECEIVED BY  
Kristen Pango TOWN CLERK

**Dates to Remember:**  
4/8 - Town Council Meeting  
4/14 – P&Z Meeting  
4/18 – Closed / Good Friday  
4/22 - Town Council Meeting

*Individuals in need of auxiliary aids for effective communication in programs and services of the Town of Wallingford are invited to make their needs and preferences known to the ADA Compliance Coordinator at 203-294-2070 five days prior to meeting date.*

EDCRMAg04072025



**Town of Wallingford**  
**Economic Development Commission**  
45 South Main Street, Room 311  
Wallingford, CT 06492

Economic Development Commission  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
March 3, 2025

**Present:** Anthony Bracale, Chair  
Frank Apuzzo, Vice Chair  
Rob Fritz, Commissioner  
Nick Lombardi, Commissioner  
Austin McAnneny, Alternate

**Absent** Hank Baum, Commissioner  
Gary Gonzalez, Commissioner  
Carl Casper, Alternate

**Others Present:** Don Crouch, Economic Development Specialist  
Stacie McCarthy, EDC Secretary

RECEIVED FOR RECORD 3/5/25  
AT 12:35 PM AND RECEIVED BY  
Kristen Long TOWN CLERK

Chairman Bracale called the regular meeting of the Economic Development Commission to order at 6:30 p.m.

1. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Chairman Bracale led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Nick Lombardi arrived at 6:31PM)

2. **Discussion on Consent Agenda:** Frank Apuzzo made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda; Rob Fritz seconded the motion. The Consent Agenda was unanimously approved.

3. **Items removed from Consent:** None

4. **Discussion: EDC Vacancies** - The group had a discussion regarding the current vacancies on the commission and agreed that seeking knowledgeable candidates with diversified backgrounds is of the utmost importance. Mr. Crouch explained that Alternates' Carl Casper and Austin McAnneny will assume the vacant Commissioner roles and three alternate vacancies will need to be filled. Commissioners agreed to send recommendations for new members to Mr. Crouch for consolidation of lists and then forwarded for consideration by Mayor Cervoni.

5. **Discussion: Organization of EDC Committees, Members, and Upcoming Projects**

- **Wallingford Worldwide – May is World Trade Month** – Chairman Bracale talked to the group about World Trade Month and reiterated Mayor Cervoni's vision of *Wallingford Worldwide* where Mayor Cervoni explained 'There is a long list of prominent companies who call Wallingford home, all providing their products and services around the globe'. As a result, in support of World Trade Month, Chairman Bracale recommended recognizing the largest exporter in Wallingford. Mr. Crouch and staff will coordinate.
- **Incentive Program** – The group discussed the current Incentive Program and how effective incentives are in attracting new businesses to Wallingford. Mr. Crouch explained that the

50 town's current incentives are narrow in focus and there may be opportunity to expand upon  
51 them based on investment dollars. The group agreed that more work needs to be done to  
52 understand how other towns are approaching incentives. The Marketing and Incentive  
53 Committee will action and report on this effort.

- 54 • **Gateway Signs** – the group discussed the appeal of Gateway Signage located in other  
55 towns and agreed these types of signs would benefit Wallingford. Commissioner Lombardi  
56 noted how aesthetically appealing the 'Welcome to Wallingford' sign looks that was placed off  
57 of exit 14, 191 North by local Girl Scout Troop. The group discussed the various capacities  
58 that such signage could be used for i.e. business sponsorships, directional, informational,  
59 educational etc. Mr. Crouch explained that the Town has looked into creating a program and  
60 locations need to be identified to determine if they are publicly or privately owned.  
61 Commissioner Fritz requested that all Commissioners scout possible locations and report  
62 back to the Commission at the next meeting. Commissioner Fritz suggested the group will  
63 then compare notes on locations to create a comprehensive list of potential locations. The  
64 group agreed and will continue to pursue this project in the coming months. The Marketing  
65 and Incentive Committee will action and report on this effort.  
66

#### 67 **6. Reports of Committees and Staff:**

- 68 • **Marketing & Retention** - Chairman Bracale explained that with many Commissioners joining  
69 the EDC over the past year, a new focus on committee representation is important. He  
70 explained that he was the past Chairman of the Marketing Committee but with his new role  
71 as Chairman of the EDC he will no longer Chair the Marketing Committee. As a result,  
72 Commissioner Lombardi agreed to Chair the Marketing Committee. Additionally Chair  
73 Bracale, recommended that the Marketing and Retention Committees continue to be  
74 combined for this year. As a result, Chair Bracale suggested Commissioner McAnneny  
75 participate given his financial background and experience. Mr. Crouch supported  
76 Commissioner McAnneny's participation, further reiterating that his experience and skill set  
77 would be an asset to the group. Commissioner McAnneny agreed to participate on the  
78 Marketing and Retention Committee. The group also discussed how both the Incentive  
79 Program and the Mayor's Business Visits will be part of the Marketing and Retention  
80 Committee's initiatives.  
81

82 Chairman Bracale shared a printed copy of the Virtual Downtown Wallingford Map that was  
83 created by Wallingford Center Inc. and financially supported by EDC.  
84

- 85 • **Planning & Zoning Liaison** – Chairman Bracale explained he would like to discuss a  
86 Planning and Zoning Committee at a future meeting when both Commissioners' Casper and  
87 Gonzalez are in attendance as he would like them to participate on this committee. The  
88 group agreed with this recommendation.  
89
- 90 • **WCI / EDC Strategic Working Group** – Mr. Crouch explained that a group of  
91 representatives from WCI and EDC have been working together to create a strategic plan  
92 related to downtown projects. He explained that Commissioners' Lombardi and Fritz have  
93 also participated in these discussions.  
94
- 95 - **RR Station** – Commissioner Lombardi explained that members of this working group  
96 have had conversations regarding the RR Station and how they can assist in seeking out  
97 possible uses for the building going forward. He and other members of the group are  
98 committed to finding opportunities that best serve the needs of the Town while preserving  
99 the historical integrity of the building and they are using their individual experience and  
100 skill sets to build a strategic plan that they hope to be able to present to the Town in the



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future. The Commissioners were all encouraged by their commitment to this very important project and anticipate hearing about the group's progress in the future.

- **Downtown Parking Lots Improvement** – Mr. Crouch explained there have been meetings with various Town Department Heads including himself, Town Planner, Town Engineer, Public Work Director and Mayor Cervoni to develop a plan of improvement for downtown parking lots. As the plan is still being developed, Mr. Crouch will share updates in the future.
- **Facade Program** – In conjunction with the downtown parking lot improvement project, the group discussed the need for façade improvement on the rear side of the buildings facing the parking lots. Mayor Cervoni has conveyed that he would like the facades improved not only to create a more appealing aesthetic, but to also create more opportunities for businesses to potentially use the renovated outdoor space. Commissioner Lombardi explained that WCI currently has a 'Façade Improvement Program' in place that provides an economic incentive to *'ANY BUILDING OWNER, TENANT OR STRUCTURE LOCATED WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT DEFINED AS CURTIS STREET TO PRINCE AND POMEROY AVENUE TO WASHINGTON STREET.'* but many businesses have not taken advantage of the program. The Marketing and Incentive Committee will review and discuss the current incentive for possible recommendations that would generate interest and engagement in the program.

**7. New Business:**

- No new business to discuss.

**8. Staff Report**

– Mr. Crouch noted some of the updates on his report including his meeting with a local developer regarding North Colony project as well as his continued conversations with a company looking to move their manufacturing business to Wallingford along with purchasing a building. Additionally, Mr. Crouch shared that the Marriott Fairfield Inn located at 100 Miles Drive, Wallingford is scheduled for auction April 14-16, seeking a new owner and operator for the 116-room hotel, with bids starting just over \$2 million. Lastly, Mr. Crouch shared that Mayor Cervoni's office is working to schedule business visits in the coming months as well as a tour of the new Wallingford Police Facility at 100 Barnes Road for town Department Heads and EDC. Mr. Crouch and staff will provide more information when available.

**9. Chair's remarks**

– Chairman Bracale explained that he is excited to work with the new group of Commissioners and he plans to meet with Mr. Crouch and Mayor Cervoni to outline the goals and objectives of the EDC as well as work to build a strategic EDC plan that will best serve and support the town in the coming years. Chairman Bracale also recognized and acknowledged former Chair Hank Baum's contribution to the EDC during his tenure as Commissioner and Chair.

**There being no further business, Frank Apuzzo made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 p.m.; Rob Fritz seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.**

Sincerely,  
  
*Stacie McCarthy*  
  
Stacie McCarthy, Secretary

# Town of Wallingford



THROUGH 2/28/25

8/12 = 67%

FOR 2025 08

	ORIGINAL APPROP	REVISED BUDGET	YTD EXPENDED	MTD EXPENDED	ENC/REQ	AVAILABLE BUDGET	PCT USED
<b>10011050 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSIO</b>							
10011050 51000 REGULAR SALARIES &	89,917	89,917	63,594.56	7,402.08	.00	26,322.44	70.7%
10011050 55110 TRANSPORTATION REIM	1,500	1,500	.00	.00	.00	1,500.00	.0%
10011050 55405 PROMOTIONAL EXPENSE	30,250	30,250	7,863.00	75.00	1,237.00	21,150.00	30.1%
10011050 56100 OFFICE EXPENSES & S	1,700	1,700	535.37	.00	930.65	233.98	86.2%
10011050 58735 OPERATING EXPENSES	1,500	1,500	1,152.80	30.68	.00	347.20	76.9%
10011050 58810 DUES AND FEES	2,500	2,500	475.00	175.00	.00	2,025.00	19.0%
TOTAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISS	127,367	127,367	73,620.73	7,682.76	2,167.65	51,578.62	59.5%
TOTAL EXPENSES	127,367	127,367	73,620.73	7,682.76	2,167.65	51,578.62	
GRAND TOTAL	127,367	127,367	73,620.73	7,682.76	2,167.65	51,578.62	59.5%

\*\* END OF REPORT - Generated by Marcia Maldonado \*\*

## Economic Development Staff Report

April 2025

### **Business Attraction**

- Commissioner Lombardi and Don Crouch met with GSB to see construction progress.
- Town Planner and Don Crouch met with land use attorney regarding YLB parcel.
- Town Planner and Don Crouch met with local developer regarding 1175 Barnes.
- Town Planner and Don Crouch met with an urban winery about location.
- Don Crouch discussions with distillery about a potential move to Wallingford.

### **Business Retention & Expansion**

- Town Planner and Don Crouch meet with local food manufacturer regarding new location.

### **Community Engagement**

- Don was the guest speaker at Wallingford Center Inc. to give Town updates.

### **Department/Industry activities**

- Town has launched Microsoft365. We will be looking to see how technology can help streamline information sharing, calendar invites, etc.
- Continued progress on SmartGov.
- Calls with multiple brokers to discuss their properties.
- Stacie McCarthy, Don Crouch, along with Mayor's Office and Communications met with web companies to see what platforms offer for the Town.
- Town has selected Invoice Cloud as the online bill pay platform for Tax, Utilities, and Permits.
- Don Crouch met with Advance CT to touch base and see how they can support some of our businesses looking to expand in Wallingford.
- Town held pre-bid walk-thru for Senior Housing master plan.
- Don Crouch met with CBIA to discuss Wallingford and the business community.
- Town Planner and Don Crouch met with Dale Kroop to discuss potential brownfield project.
- Mayor Cervoni and Don Crouch met with Liz Davis and Erin Barnes, President and CEO of Main Street America to tour downtown as CT Main Street chose Wallingford to be featured in an article and video for the State of CT Legislature.
- Stacie McCarthy and Don Crouch worked with Mayor's office to schedule Business Visits
- Mayor Cervoni has released his proposed budget for next fiscal year.

### **Social Media Metrics**

- 377 followers to our LinkedIn page. Last report was 377.
- 1,975 followers on the Town of Wallingford Facebook page. Last report was 1,900.

## Economic Development Staff Report

### In The News

**CT Mirror – February 28, 2025**

**CT bill would eliminate minimum off-street parking requirements**

The Connecticut legislature may soon weigh in on parking policy, joining an expanding movement across the country to cut down on the number of parking lots in favor of denser, more walkable neighborhoods.

**Record Journal – March 1, 2025**

**Census Bureau: Connecticut housing permits rise 15% in January, continuing growth trend**

Connecticut developers kicked off 2025 with continued momentum for housing permits in municipalities surveyed by the U.S. Census Bureau, with the January estimates in line with a 15% increase last year over average annual totals in prior years.

**Record Journal – March 2, 2025**

**Fairfield Inn near I-91 in Wallingford up for auction**

The Marriott Fairfield Inn in Wallingford is up for auction, with bids starting at just over \$2 million. The auction is scheduled for April 14-16 and seeks a new owner and operator for the 116-room hotel located on 100 Miles Drive.

**Hartford Business Journal – March 4, 2025**

**Trump Administration targets cutting 5% of commercial real estate space leased by federal agencies in CT**

The federal government is looking to eliminate six leases in Connecticut, totaling more than 32,000 square feet of office space, as part of a Trump Administration drive to cut spending. An \$80,590 annual lease of a 2,711-square-foot office at 97 Barnes Road in Wallingford. The office hosted an invasive species containment and control office for the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

**PATCH – March 4, 2025**

**CT Tax Burden Among Highest In U.S., New Study Says**

A new analysis shows that Connecticut pays some of the highest taxes in the U.S. The WalletHub study ranks Connecticut No. 49 in the country, with residents. When adjusted for cost of living, Connecticut does even worse, ranking dead last out of the 50 states and Washington, D.C.

**Journal Inquirer – March 5, 2025**

**East Hartford increases fines for property blight as a warning to landlords, property owners**

Town officials hope that updates to East Hartford's anti-blight initiatives will serve as a warning to landlords and homeowners to keep their properties up to code and a call to residents to report those who don't. During a press conference Monday, Mayor Connor Martin spoke of several changes the town has made, including increasing property maintenance fines from \$100 per day or incident up to as much as \$1,000.

**CT Insider – March 6, 2025**

**From rental aid to office conversions, CT proposal aims to tackle housing crisis**

Connecticut Democrats want millions of dollars in the coming year for rental assistance, along with a new panel to study how to boost the construction of "starter" homes for buyers — and a big inducement for towns to support construction of more affordable housing.



## Economic Development Staff Report

**CT Insider – March 6, 2025**

### **Connecticut adds 1,800 housing units that qualified for state or federal assistance in 2023**

Nearly 1,800 more Connecticut apartments and houses qualified for some sort of assistance under federal and state affordable housing programs in 2023, according to the latest state data.

**PATCH – March 7, 2025**

### **Nationwide Layoffs Spiked 245% in February: See CT Impact**

Layoffs soared in Connecticut and across the United States last month amid a mass of federal government job cuts and canceled contracts, along with staff reductions at retailers and other businesses. In Connecticut, 434 jobs have been eliminated so far this year, according to Challenger. Last year, 4,015 jobs were eliminated in the state. On the state Department of Labor's website under the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act, one firm in Connecticut closed last month, J.J. Ryan Corporation (dba RexForge), which resulted in 103 people losing jobs, and another firm, Rheem Manufacturing Company (Eemax Division), is slated to close between April and July. Seventy-eight positions will be eliminated by the move.

**Record Journal – March 8, 2025**

### **Wallingford's Hidden Brook Lane in limbo seven years after construction**

A small cul-de-sac with a handful of single-family homes, Hidden Brook Lane was constructed seven years ago. When most neighborhoods are constructed developers will sign an agreement with the town handing over ownership of the roads and associated amenities - allowing them to take care of maintenance, snow removal, and more. Yet seven years after being built the developer has yet to sign over the road to the town, keeping it in private hands and leaving the developer to be individually responsible for upkeep of the road – which residents say it's happening.

**CT Insider – March 8, 2025**

### **From 'just cause' to zoning reform, these CT housing proposals move closer to becoming law**

Following a marathon meeting Thursday lasting more than 12 hours, the Connecticut legislature's Housing Committee advanced several dozen bills on subjects ranging from tenant protections to zoning reform. **Zoning reform** - Lawmakers also debated a zoning reform proposal known as "Towns Take the Lead," under which most Connecticut towns and cities would be required to set goals for a designated number of affordable housing units and adjust their zoning regulations to meet those targets. **'Priority housing development zones'** - Amid a range of zoning reform proposals from across the political spectrum, Gov. Ned Lamont has proposed somewhat of a compromise measure. Under his bill, towns would be incentivized — but not required — to build rental units in designated "priority housing development zones." Towns that do so would earn points toward an exemption from a key housing regulation known as 8-30g.

**CT Insider – March 9, 2025**

### **Housing developer and builder Joseph Carabetta dies at 97**

Joseph Carabetta, the founding principal of the Carabetta Companies and builder of thousands of homes in Connecticut and the East Coast, died Tuesday at MidState Medical Center after a short illness. He was 97.

**Record Journal – March 9, 2025**

### **Wallingford wineries look for alternatives after hail destroyed last year's grape crop**

Following a hail storm that destroyed their crops last year, one Wallingford winery is seeking to change the town's ordinances to supplement their crop should a similar storm happen again. Paradise Hills Vineyard & Winery, owned by the Ruggiero Family, will ask the Planning and Zoning Committee on Monday for a zoning change for their area of town, impacting both themselves and the nearby Gouveia Vineyards.



## Economic Development Staff Report

### **National Mortgage Professional – March 10, 2025**

#### **Rocket Companies to Acquire Redfin in \$1.75 Billion Deal, Reshaping Online Homebuying**

In a move that could reshape the landscape of the U.S. housing market, Rocket Companies, the nation's largest mortgage lender, announced on Monday that it has agreed to acquire Redfin, a leading online real estate brokerage, in an all-stock transaction valued at \$1.75 billion.

### **Journal Inquirer – March 11, 2025**

#### **Community Investment Fund board approves \$77M for redevelopment projects**

Members of the Community Investment Fund board approved more than \$77 million for development projects throughout the state on Tuesday, including \$10 million for the redevelopment of the Enfield Square mall, which was praised by several legislators for potentially being a model to revitalize struggling malls in the state.

### **CT Insider – March 12, 2025**

#### **Shake Shack to join Chipotle as tenants at the Shops at Stonebridge in Cheshire**

Shake Shack is one of the newest additions to the offerings at the Shops at Stonebridge development in Cheshire.

### **Record Journal – March 13, 2025**

#### **Officials consider recreation, office centers to revitalize Meriden Mall**

The Meriden Mall has lost most of its anchor stores over the last few years – Sears, Best Buy, Dick's Sporting Goods, Ruby Tuesday's, and more. The retailer Boscov's and T.J. Maxx remain, with the latter being rumored to be relocating to Cheshire within the near future, putting the future of the mall into question. Officials and business experts have said that the Meriden Mall still has potential on account of being centrally located and its proximity to I-691. Their plan, they said, is to encourage office and recreational options, like Club Pickleball, that offered attractions beyond retail which couldn't be offered in online stores. As part of that commitment, Meriden's Economic Development Director Joseph Feest said that Yale New Haven Hospital had purchased the former Macy's location to build a medical office and clinic.

### **CT Insider – March 14, 2025**

#### **'Steady growth': Connecticut economy adds 16,000 jobs in 2024, labor department reports**

Connecticut added 16,000 jobs in 2024, while unemployment stayed low, according to data for the year released Friday by the state Department of Labor.

### **CT Insider – March 15, 2025**

#### **Future of Connecticut malls may reside with residential space**

Experts have estimated that another 110,000 units of affordable housing are needed to meet the state's shortfall. Connecticut officials are taking a multi-pronged approach in addressing that need, but elsewhere across the country, states, counties, communities and the private sector are drawing on what might seem to be an unlikely source as part of their efforts to solve the problem: Converting vacant space in aging shopping malls into housing.

### **Record Journal – March 16, 2025**

#### **Wallingford considers heightening scrutiny for nonprofit funding for new budget year**

The town council is considering stipulations to require guarantees from nonprofits seeking funding from the town that the taxpayer money is being used properly. Though not formally proposed yet, officials are considering requiring those organizations to provide their 990 financial forms along with signed guarantees that the money will be used for its intended purpose.

## Economic Development Staff Report

**PATCH – March 19, 2025**

### **Beloved CT Theme Park in Bristol/Southington To Have New Owner**

The family entertainment company that owns the famous 'Dollywood' in Tennessee has acquired a CT theme park.

**PATCH – March 20, 2025**

### **Kids' Amusement Center, Eatery Opening At Meriden Mall**

Two new businesses are opening at the Meriden Mall: Adventure Palace and MozPizza & Grinders, according to mall management. Adventure Palace has taken over the former Best Buy space, and Moz Pizza & Grinders has taken a food court location.

**Hartford Business Journal – March 20, 2025**

### **CT company to buy Beacon Roofing Supply for \$118**

Publicly traded QXO, which was founded in June 2024 by billionaire investor Brad Jacobs, has announced it has entered into a definitive merger agreement under which QXO will acquire Beacon for \$124.35 per share in cash.

**CBIA – March 21, 2025**

### **Bristol's Bauer National Exporter of the Year**

Bristol-based Bauer, Inc., which recently marked its 100th anniversary, is earning national recognition. The aerospace components manufacturer, led by CEO Louis Auletta and senior vice president Michael Auletta, is the U.S. Small Business Administration's National Exporter of the Year.

**CT Insider – March 21, 2025**

### **Cheshire restaurateur Viron Rondo Osteria buys Highland Ave. building as part of plan to expand**

The owner of Cheshire's popular Viron Rondo Osteria restaurant at 1721 Highland Ave. just bought the 48,000-square-foot office building two doors down at 1781 Highland Ave. — and has the property between them under contract.

**CT Insider – March 22, 2025**

### **Chain restaurant closings are becoming more frequent in Connecticut, but the reason why varies**

Some chains, like TGI Friday's closed entirely while other restaurants, like Ruby Tuesday, On The Border and Hooters reduced their presence in Connecticut. Other restaurant chains that have Connecticut locations, including Denny's and Red Robin, have announced large scale closings, but haven't named those they will shutter or which are facing financial difficulties that will likely necessitate closure.

**CT Insider – March 23, 2025**

### **Wallingford approves Choate Rosemary Hall building pedestrian bridge over Christian Street**

An elevated pedestrian bridge will now be able to connect Choate Rosemary Hall's north and south campus along Christian Street. The proposal was brought before the town council last year when the school sought an air easement to construct the 17-foot-tall wooden bridge, which is planned to be located just south of Rosemary Lane. It was recently approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

**CT Insider – March 24, 2025**

### **DOGE says it canceled \$1 million in leases in Connecticut**

The leases DOGE says it canceled include six locations in Connecticut, though little information on the leases beyond the city and the annual lease amount are included in each listing. The elimination of the Animal and Plant Inspection Service's location in Wallingford saved an annual \$80,590, a total savings of \$13,432.



## Economic Development Staff Report

**CT Mirror – March 24, 2025**

### **'Work Live Ride' is back on the legislature's docket. Here's what to know**

A controversial bill aimed at creating more housing and development near public transportation stops is before the Connecticut General Assembly again, after passing in the House last year but failing to get a vote in the Senate. Dubbed Work, Live, Ride by the housing advocacy group Desegregate CT, this measure would prioritize communities with qualifying transit-oriented districts when doling out discretionary infrastructure funding or grants such as the Small Town Economic Assistance Program (STEAP) or the Urban Act Grant Program, both of which help municipalities invest in economic revitalization.

**CT Mirror – March 24, 2025**

### **Real estate website gives buyers a window on competitive bids for Connecticut listings**

Final Offer is being used in Connecticut by William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty based in Stamford, with a statewide map of listings online at [www.finaloffer.com](http://www.finaloffer.com). Final Offer makes the information available for free to registered users on bids for residential properties, with text alerts available for when a new bid is entered on any property. That gives house hunters instant intel, allowing them to mull whether to raise their own offer on the spot.

**New Haven Register – March 24, 2025**

### **New Haven's Columbus House hires CEO following nationwide search**

Columbus House, one of Connecticut's leading agencies providing shelter and services to people experiencing homelessness, reached all the way to California to hire its new leader. New CEO Louis Gill was hired following a national search, more than a year after former CEO Margaret Middleton gave notice, Columbus House announced this week. He will start May 1.

**LoopNet – March 24, 2025**

### **33-39 North Main Street & 24-25 Wallace -2 Retail Properties Offered at \$5,400,000 in Wallingford, CT**

O,R&L Commercial is pleased to present a rare investment opportunity located at 33-39 North Main Street and 24-25 Wallace Ave located in downtown Wallingford, Connecticut. 33-39 North Main Street is a 29,879± SF 4-Story Mixed-Use Multi-family / Retail / Office Building built in 1863 centrally and prominently located on downtown Wallingford's North Main Street. The building boasts Archie Moore's Restaurant at street level along with 7 other retail / office units on the ground floor, while the upper floors consist of 19 residential apartments. There is a 40 space parking lot included directly behind the building adjacent to 2 large municipal parking lots. 24-25 Wallace Ave is a 2,440± SF Retail Restaurant building also behind 33-37 North Main Street that is tenanted by Center Street Brewing. The 2 properties are contiguous for a total of 1.0± acre and are in the TC (town center) zone. Having been under the same ownership for 35+ years, this offering represents an exciting and rare opportunity to own one of Wallingford's gems and commercial destinations in the downtown "Main Street" area--known for its restaurants, shops and pedestrian-friendly atmosphere.





## Economic Development Staff Report

**Patch – March 25, 2025**

### **New Barbecue Restaurant Opens In Southington**

A little more than three years after announcing a new site, the owners of a popular Wallingford-based barbecue restaurant say a new Southington venture is now open. Pig Rig BBQ & Catering has a new smokehouse at 1843 Meriden-Waterbury Turnpike in the Milldale section of Southington, and owners officially announced its opening on Monday, March 24.

**ALM/GLOBEST.COM – March 25, 2025**

### **Net Lease Investors Adapt as Economic Uncertainty Lingers**

Interest rate volatility and trade policy shifts create uncertainty, but net lease activity is expected to pick up in 2025. Tariffs, interest rate fluctuations and macroeconomic uncertainties continue to reshape the net lease investment market. As these factors evolve, investors are working to make long-term decisions in an uncertain environment.

**Record Journal – March 26, 2025**

### **Wallingford's Chabad House fundraising to establish Jewish community center downtown**

Though Chabad of has been operating in the community for over 20 years, it has typically rented facilities through Wallingford HUBCAP and others, though temporarily suspended operations during the pandemic. During that time, however, leadership decided that they would finally settle into a permanent location within a home at 22 South Whittlesey Ave. in the heart of downtown where it plans to open Chabad House. A year after the purchase, the group has the permits they need to begin interior renovations - looking for \$115,000 in donations to finish HVAC, plumbing improvements, and interior renovations to convert the home into a community space.

**CBIA – March 26, 2025**

### **End in Sight for Transfer Act Reforms**

The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection recently submitted new regulations to the Regulations Review Committee. The current Transfer Act has been largely ineffective, with only about 500 out of 5,000 sites successfully exiting the program. This inefficiency has left many properties blighted and hindered economic growth across Connecticut. As these regulations are rolled out and implemented, CBIA is committed to working with the committee, DEEP, and the Department of Economic and Community Development to create a transition plan for properties currently stuck in the old regulatory framework.

**CT Insider – March 26, 2025**

### **Dollar Tree is selling Family Dollar, a chain with dozens of CT locations, for \$1 billion**

Dollar Tree has agreed to sell Family Dollar to two private equity firms for \$1 billion, nearly a decade after purchasing the chain for more than eight times that price, the company announced on Wednesday. Family Dollar has nearly 8,000 stores in the U.S., 53 of which are in Connecticut, according to its website.

**Hartford Business Journal - March 26, 2025**

### **Wallingford aerospace manufacturer acquired**

A Simsbury businessman has purchased Wallingford-based aerospace gasket manufacturer Corru-Seals Inc. Yogi Tharanibalan did not reveal what he paid for the business, which was established in the town in 1977. Tharanibalan most recently was general manager of Pursuit Aerospace's central Connecticut operations, and before that worked for one of Pursuit's predecessor companies, Whitcraft. Corru-Seals is a manufacturer of gaskets, compression packings, oil and mechanical seals, primarily for aerospace applications. It supplies companies including General Electric, Pratt & Whitney, Honeywell and Rolls-Royce. According to the new owner, the company employs around two dozen people and has annual sales around \$5 million.

## Economic Development Staff Report

news.cision.com – March 27, 2025

### **NEL ASA: Receives purchase order from Collins Aerospace for U.S. Navy Stacks**

Nel Hydrogen has received a purchase order for PEM electrolyser stacks for about USD 6 million from Collins Aerospace to be used by the U.S. Navy to produce oxygen for critical life support onboard submarines. The stacks will be delivered over several years, with initial deliveries in late 2025. This order is the most recent in a series of deliveries to the client, where Nel has a long track record of developing and delivering equipment for this application. The purchase order is for an undisclosed number of stacks that will be produced at Nel's manufacturing facility in Wallingford, Connecticut.

Hartford Courant – March 27, 2025

### **CTDOT to discuss future of transit and transportation in CT. 'So much is changing,' officials say**

The Connecticut Transportation is starting what they hope will be an annual tradition. The CTDOT is hosting the inaugural 2025 Transportation Showcase on April 1 at the Connecticut Center in Hartford. Some topics include how to make trains operate faster, investments into services and micro transit services to help with connections near train stations.

Record Journal – March 27, 2025

### **Connecticut loses 200 federal jobs in February, overall employment down slightly**

The loss of 200 federal jobs contributed to an overall decline of 1,200 jobs in February, state labor officials reported Thursday.

CT Insider – March 28, 2025

### **Connecticut's late 2024 economic growth languishes among bottom-10 states: Federal report**

Connecticut had one of the slowest-growing economies in the country late last year, according to new federal data — highlighting the challenges, including a tight labor market, that the state faces in its post-pandemic recovery.

Record Journal – March 29, 2025

### **Wallingford moves ahead with regulations for nonprofit funding**

The town government will be sending out letters to nonprofits soliciting information for continued funding for this year's budget, after a town council vote Tuesday. The town will now require nonprofits to send in 990 financial forms and a statement of use for town funds that would be appropriated as a written agreement that they'll be used for exactly what was allocated for. Around 12 organizations would be affected by these new stipulations, as confirmed by Mayor Vincent Cervoni, as they are looking to maintain funding for the same organizations that were part of the budget last year, should they meet the town's requirements.

National Mortgage Professional – March 31, 2025

### **Rocket Companies to Acquire Mr. Cooper In \$9.4 Billion Deal**

Rocket Companies, the nation's largest mortgage lender, announces today that it has reached a definitive agreement to acquire Mr. Cooper Group, America's largest mortgage servicer, in an all-stock transaction valued at \$9.4 billion. The deal significantly expands Rocket's already dominant position in the mortgage market and aims to streamline homeownership services through advanced data analytics and AI-powered technology.



## Economic Development Staff Report

**CT Insider – April 1, 2025**

**Lamont unveils \$30M housing program to build 'generational wealth' in CT, particularly in its cities**

On a vacant lot next to an abandoned multi-family apartment building in the under-resourced Clay Arsenal neighborhood, Gov. Ned Lamont on Tuesday announced a new multi-million dollar initiative to leverage loans, down payments and energy upgrades to promote the promise of generational wealth in home ownership. In all, the state will commit \$30 million to start "CT Home Funds," including \$8.5 million in low-interest loans for energy and housing code improvements; \$10 million for home rehabilitation under the current \$150 million "Time to Own" program, which has already provided forgivable loans of down payments for 5,800 first-time home buyers; and \$11.5 million for grants of \$150,000 for non-profits and small developers.

**CT Insider - April 2, 2025**

**Middletown bans new smoke shops following arrests connected to cannabis, cocaine sales**

No new retail establishment that sell tobacco smoking products or paraphernalia will be allowed in the city, under a unanimous zone code change the city Planning and Zoning Commission recently approved. The measure follows arrests at smoke shops and convenience stores across the city and state.

**ALM/GLOBEST.COM – April 3, 2025**

**Why Multifamily Developers Have Reason to Be Optimistic, but Cautiously**

Multifamily developers have faced significant challenges in the last couple of years. The construction pipeline has shrunk in the wake of high interest rates, limited construction capital and an uncertain economic climate. The end of 2024 marked the lowest number of new construction starts in a decade. As economic conditions improve this year and rates begin to stabilize, multifamily developers are cautiously optimistic about new activity. According to Mark Bridge, EVP and senior director at Matthews Real Estate Investment Services markets like California that are adopting pro-development legislation and providing incentives for new construction should benefit. While things are looking up, he says there are still some headwinds to new development.

**Liz Davis (Executive Director WCI) Email– March 20, 2025**

**CT Main Street article on WCI for the State of CT Legislature**

CT Main Street has picked a few Main Street partners to feature, which will be distributed to the Legislature in a few weeks. I thought I would share this with you as Wallingford is one of the featured articles about the good work that we are doing.

Last week, CMSC worked on a short "Who we are/ what we do" video. They featured some of Wallingford's businesses as part of their marketing pieces. This will also be coming out shortly, and we will promote this on our social media.



# Supporting Connecticut's Great Downtowns

## CMSC's Annual Assessment: A Roadmap to Vibrancy



Connecticut Main Street Center's mission is advancing communities across Connecticut to establish and maintain vibrant Main Streets.

We offer a wide variety of education, trainings, and technical assistance that guide communities on how to cultivate and manage a great downtown.



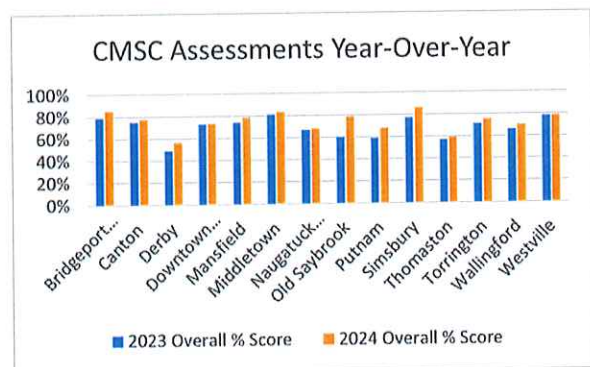
### About CMSC's Main Street Management Assessment

CMSC created the Main Street Management Assessment to strengthen and support our main street members, breaking down the main street management process into concrete, incremental action items, and measuring yearly progress.

Since its launch in December 2022, we've conducted 71 assessments in 49 member communities.

The Assessment is a comprehensive examination of how a downtown is performing based on the Four Point Approach, national best practices for main street management, and national planning standards such as Complete Streets. The Assessment is centered on cultivating vibrant communities – whether urban, suburban, or rural, identifying areas of strength and weakness, measuring year-over-year progress, and recommending next steps and areas of priority.

In the Assessment, the Four Points of Main Street Management is broken down into 84 specific action items. CMSC staff measure each action on a 1-4 rubric, sorted and weighted into fundamental, intermediate, and advanced priorities.



CMSC piloted its annual Assessment in December 2022 and has since performed 71 Assessments in 49 member communities, providing in-depth reports on the results and customized resources for improvement to each. 90% of communities showed improvement in their second annual Assessment results.



## What Our Members Say

### Liz Davis, Executive Director, Wallingford Center Inc.

Wallingford Center Inc. has been a CMSC member community since 2017. CMSC conducted two annual Assessments, one in July 2023 and one July 2024, for the downtown management organization. Based on their strengths and weaknesses outlined in the results, plus guidance from CMSC's Field Services Director, they moved from an events-focused downtown funding strategy to an economic development one; built relationships between business owners and landlords; created a plan for more arts initiatives; and fostered collaborations among the town, business owners, landlords, the historical society, and even the health department.

For example, the Assessment report revealed a need to build stronger relationships with the downtown's building landlords, especially since many of their local business tenants also had little contact with them.

In response, Ms. Davis and the WCI Board formed a Landlord Committee comprised of landlords, business owners, and the town's building official. The Committee meets every six months to discuss zoning issues and changes, how to create environments where the businesses can succeed, and how improved collaboration will result in more revenue for the business, landlord and town.

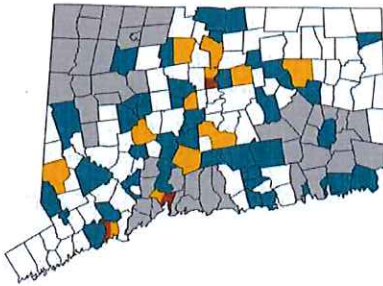
Bringing stakeholders together is a key element to successful main street management. Seeing the positive results of WCI's many initiatives, Ms. Davis additionally leverages the Assessment to educate volunteer boards or committee members, town officials, and stakeholders where and why they should invest resources for maximum benefit to the downtown.

**"It opened my eyes to something we should be looking for and should be doing."**

*- Liz Davis, WCI Executive Director*



## About Connecticut Main Street Center



CMSC has spent over 25 years working with dozens of Connecticut communities to craft compelling, lively and welcoming downtowns. As the state's leading downtown resource, we take great pride in offering our members a wealth of education, information and guidance.

### Our vast array of in-person, virtual, and peer-to-peer offerings include:

- **Annual Walking Tour & Assessment** with Main Street stakeholders
- **National & Local expertise** featured in our educational & training events

Our Main Street member network stretches corner-to-corner across the state, representing 105 communities and impacting over 2 million Connecticut residents.

We follow Main Street America's Four Point Approach™ to Main Street Management, a nationally tested strategy for creating and maintaining vibrant communities. The application of this approach works in downtowns of all sizes from rural village centers to urban settings, and serves to inform all of CMSC's programs, projects, and services.

- **Several on-the-ground programs to build local capacity, fill vacancies, and promote local businesses including:**

- *Main Street Accelerator*
- *NW CT PROMISE Program*
- *Diversity on Main: New London*
- *Greater Norwich Area Rural Business Development Program*
- Online repository of best practices, webinars, training guides, and helpful links via our **Community Resource Center**
- **Main Street Hotline** for pressing challenges

### Scan to visit our website



### For More Information

Please contact Michelle McCabe, Executive Director, or visit our website for free information and resources

- **860-280-2557**
- [michelle@ctmainstreet.com](mailto:michelle@ctmainstreet.com)
- [www.ctmainstreet.org](http://www.ctmainstreet.org)